
This fact sheet summarizes the United States Environmental Protection Agency's Proposed Plan for cleanup of the East Waterway Operable Unit of the Harbor Island Superfund Site. The Proposed Plan describes the different cleanup alternatives evaluated and presents EPA's preferred alternative.

## Why does the East Waterway need to be cleaned up?

Industrial discharges, marine activities, storm drains, and combined sewer overflows have polluted surface water and sediments on the river bottom in the East Waterway. Polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs), arsenic, carcinogenic polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (cPAHs), and dioxins/furans are the four contaminants of concern that pose the greatest risk to people's health in the East Waterway. In addition, PAHs, tributyltin, and other contaminants pose risks to bottom-dwelling organisms and fish at the East Waterway. For more information about these contaminants of concern, please visit **the Proposed Plan.**

## About the East Waterway

The East Waterway, located southwest of downtown Seattle, is one of ten operable units of the Harbor Island Superfund Site.

Over the past 100 years, the East Waterway has been modified to support urban and industrial development. Historical activities along the East Waterway have included marine terminals, shipyards, bulk fuel terminals, recycling and scrap metal yards, cement manufacturing, log handling, small boat marinas, boat manufacturing, and repair.

## *Public Comment Period*

### Comments Due by June 21, 2021

You can provide comment on the Proposed Plan in three ways:

1. **By mail:**
   **Ravi Sanga**, Remedial Project Manager
   U.S. EPA Region 10,
   1200 Sixth Avenue, Suite 155, Mail Stop 12-D12-12
   Seattle, WA 98101
2. **By email:** EastWaterwayComments@epa.gov
3. **By voicemail:** You may leave oral comments about the Proposed Plan at this voicemail box: 206-553-1505.

### Learn more about the Proposed Plan!

EPA will present information and answer questions about the Proposed Plan at an online community meeting on **June 2, 2021.** The virtual meeting allows us to comply with current social distancing guidance from the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and other local, state, and federal health advice, while still providing you with the opportunity to comment on the Proposed Plan for the East Waterway. Spanish interpretation will be provided for the online meeting.

**You may view a pre-recorded presentation about the Proposed Plan in English and Spanish at the Harbor Island Superfund Site website** (https://www.epa.gov/superfund/harbor-island).

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## *About the East Waterway*

Today, the East Waterway remains an active industrial waterway, which is used primarily for commercial shipping, container loading, and transport. Parts of the East Waterway are also used for recreational activities that include boating, kayaking, and fishing.

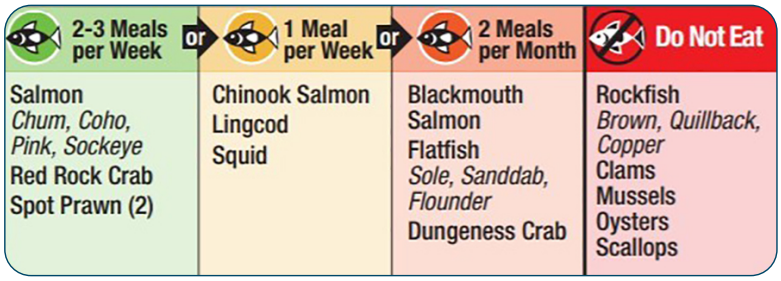
The Muckleshoot Indian Tribe and Suquamish Tribe have usual and accustomed fishing rights in the Waterway. Treaty protected uses within the East Waterway include a commercial salmon fishery, as well as ceremonial and subsistence shellfish harvesting.

The East Waterway connects the Green/Duwamish River to the Puget Sound and provides habitat for fish and wildlife, including rockfish and Dungeness crab. The waterway is also a migratory pathway for endangered salmon.

## What is the risk to people and wildlife from contamination in the East Waterway?

Contamination in the East Waterway may pose risks to aquatic life, and health risks to people who fish or engage in activities that cause them to be exposed to sediment. The primary way people may be exposed to contamination in the East Waterway is from eating resident seafood caught there. They may also be directly exposed to contaminated sediment while net-fishing or harvesting clams.

Fish and other wildlife are exposed to contaminants present in both the water and sediment. Fish can also be exposed to sediment-related contaminants when they eat contaminated prey.




*Washington Department of Health's seafood consumption advisory for Elliott Bay, including the East Waterway*

## What is CERCLA and Superfund?

The Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act (CERCLA) was passed into law by Congress in 1980. This law created the Superfund program, responsible for cleaning up some of the nation's most contaminated sites, and responding to environmental emergencies, oil spills and natural disasters.

## Where we are in the cleanup process?

### Who is involved?

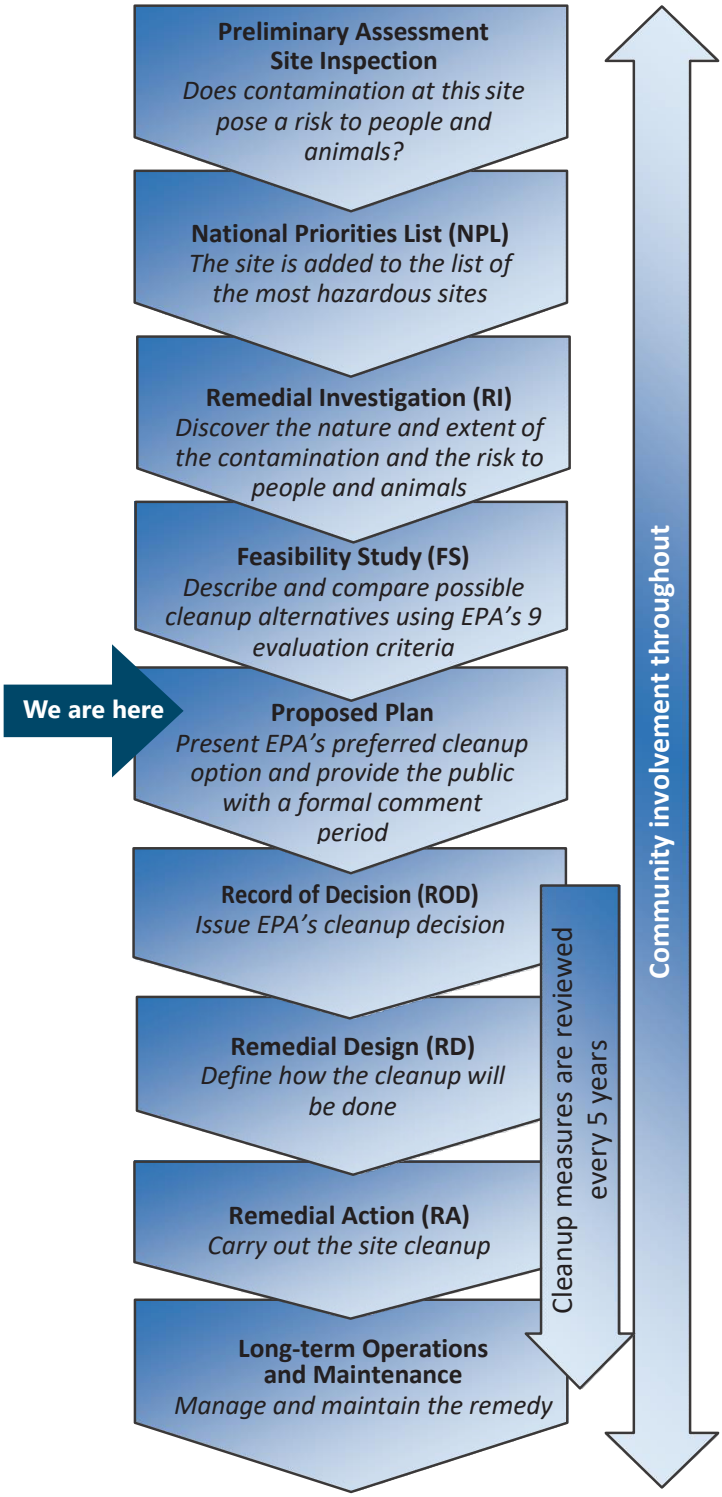
EPA anticipates overseeing cleanup of the East Waterway which is expected to be conducted primarily by potentially responsible parties that may include the Port of Seattle, the City of Seattle, King County and others. The Port of Seattle performed the remedial investigation and feasibility study of the East Waterway Operable Unit under an agreement with EPA. EPA is working with the U.S. Coast Guard on an evaluation of cleanup alternatives for the Slip 36 portion of the East Waterway which is owned by the federal government.

The overall strategy for addressing contamination and the associated risks in the East Waterway includes two components:

1. Cleanup of the existing contamination in the East Waterway; and,
2. Control sources of contamination from activities directly discharging into the East Waterway.

Source control is being conducted by the Port of Seattle, City of Seattle, and King County, with oversight by EPA.

*The chart on Page 3 shows where we are in the process⇨*




## EPA's Preferred Alternative

EPA has evaluated a range of alternatives presented in the Feasibility Study, and proposes the following cleanup actions to address the 157-acre East Waterway Site:

Approximately 121 acres of active cleanup of contaminated sediments, including:

- Dredging 99 acres (960,000 cubic yards);
- Capping 7 acres (this may include dredging to address final elevation needs);
- On-site treatment of 12 acres under piers and docks using amendments to contain and sequester contaminants; and
- Enhanced natural recovery of 3 acres for a portion of the East Waterway under the West Seattle Bridge/Spokane Street Bridge corridor.

**Monitored natural recovery** in 36 acres where there would be no dredging, capping or treatment, to allow natural processes to reduce sediment concentrations.

**Institutional controls** including fish advisories, educational outreach, waterway and land use restrictions, and regulated navigational areas.

The preferred alternative includes cleanup goals for PCBs, arsenic, and dioxins/furans based on anthropogenic background using existing upstream sediment concentration data from the Green River. Anthropogenic background is defined as concentrations that may be present in the environment due to human activities but that are not attributable to a Superfund site.

Construction work associated with this alternative is estimated to take approximately 10 years. This timeline assumes that in-water work activities would stop during endangered salmon migration and traditional tribal fishing seasons which take place from October through February each year. The total estimated cost is $290 million.

EPA proposes this alternative because it provides the best balance of reducing risks to people's health and the environment within a reasonable time frame, long-term reliability of the cleanup, achievability, cost-effectiveness, and is consistent with future uses of the East Waterway. It will achieve substantial risk reduction, primarily through dredging and capping the most contaminated sediments, while using in-situ treatment in areas where access by dredging equipment is limited or where dredging may undermine the stability of structures.

## What happens after the comment period?

EPA will accept comments on the East Waterway Proposed Plans until June 21, 2021. EPA will make its final decision on the cleanup only after considering public comments. EPA will summarize the comments received from the public, and respond to those comments, in a Responsiveness Summary. EPA will place all comments and the Responsiveness Summary in EPA's Administrative Record for the Harbor Island Site. EPA may modify the preferred alternative or select another cleanup alternative based on new information or public comments and then issue the cleanup plan (also known as the Record of Decision - ROD). You are encouraged to review and comment on all of the alternatives in the Proposed Plan. EPA expects to issue the ROD in late 2021. Once the ROD is issued, a detailed design of the cleanup will be developed before construction begins.

## For More Information

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For information on U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's work in Harbor Island, including the East Waterway, please visit: epa.gov/superfund/harbor-island

*If you need materials in an alternative format, please contact Julie Congdon at 800-424-4372, ext. 4092.*
*TDD or TTY users, please call 800-877-8339 and give the operator Julie's phone number.*


West Seattle
Harbor Island Superfund Site
16TH AV SW
Other Harbor Island OUs
Elliott Bay
11TH AV SW
WEST SEATTLE BRIDGE
Terminal 102
Lower Duwamish Waterway Superfund Site
Terminal 18
Terminal 104
East Waterway OU
SW SPOKANE ST
Terminal 25
Slip 27
Terminal 30
Coast Guard
E MARGINAL WY S
Slip 36
Feet
0
750
1,500
Seattle
ALASKAN WY S


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Harbor Island
East Waterway
West Waterway

# *Cleaning up the East Waterway Superfund Site –*

## *Proposed Plan available for your review and comment*

EPA United States Environmental Protection Agency

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